Wednesday 28 February 2024

Support and challenge– a guide for Governors

HILLINGDON

LONDON

This session is part of a suite of training offered to support governors in Hillingdon Schools.

Support and Challenge– a guide

for Governors

This online session will be delivered by the LA School Improvement Education Advisors, topics to be covered will include strategic planning, school Improvement, financial management, accountability and compliance plus more.

HILLINGDON
LONDON

Introductions:

- ➤ **Jason Hughes - Primary School Advisor (presenting)**
- ➤ **Richard Woodfinn - Primary School Advisor (presenting)**
- ➤ **Nicki O'Flanagan - Education Improvement Officer (supporting)**

Polite Request

Please do not record any of the sessions. We want leaders to be able to speak freely about their schools

An edited recording of the session will be made available

Suggestions

➢ **Please use the 'chat' option to ask questions, all questions will be answered, some by a follow up email**

➢ **The slides will be made available to you, please make notes as you see fit**

Agenda

1. **School Improvement and Data**

2. **Strategic planning**

3. **Financial management**

4. **Accountability**

5. **Compliance**

6. **OFSTED and the deep dive methodology**

7. **Safeguarding**

Governors as Strategic Leaders
DFE core functions

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

You need to know your school.

Self Evaluation Form (SEF)

- **Does your school complete a SEF? If so, how often?**

- **What does the latest one say?**

- **Acronym**

School Development Plan (SDP)
or School Improvement Plan (SIP)

- **The SDP/SIP should be the driving force for school improvement**

- **The self-evaluation (SEF) needs to be accurate and give a clear picture of where the school is. For example, which subject area requires the most support? Why?**

- **The SEF should link seamlessly to the SDP/SIP**

Challenge & Support

- **How do governors balance appropriate challenge and support?**

- **How do you walk this fine line?**

- **Where does trust come into this?**

Challenge & Support

- **Begins with knowledge of the school. How do governors obtain their information SEF?**

- **Pupil voice? Teacher voice?**

- **Are governors 'allowed' to do exit interviews? Or ask staff their opinions?**

Local and National issues

The fall out from COVID

Reading

Disadvantaged/FSM (particular issue in borough)

BME – best performers – positive changes

Black Caribbean – not improving

EAL

Asylum and refugees

Challenge and support

Does this mean asking difficult questions?

Recently a school told me that they are going to share some staffing issues with governors - as this was affecting the development of a particular subject.

Why so late, not so that the governors should necessarily get involved but why did they not know?

Challenge & Support

- **Has your school addressed the areas identified for improvement at you most recent OFSTED inspection?**

Challenge & Support

- **What questions have you asked recently?**

- **What documents have you scrutinised?**

- **What discussions have you had with senior leaders on improving areas identified for development?**

Governor self evaluation

- **When did the last skills audit for your governors take place?**

- **Have you addressed those areas that need improving in your governing body?**

Agenda

Data

Data

Governance Handbook

- It is a clear expectation of the Governance Competency Framework that all Governors, and not just the nominated Data Governor, are able to navigate and understand the data the school presents.

Data

Governance Handbook

- Despite the shift in focus of the Education Inspection Framework, in order to both understand their school's strengths and areas of development, particularly at this point in time, and ask those constructively challenging questions that are expected of them, Governors still need to understand and interrogate their school's data

Data

How are leaders sure of the accuracy of internal data?

What moderation has taken place/planned?

Data

How are leaders sure of the accuracy of internal data? Moderation

What moderation has taken place/planned? Exam board, working with other schools, national bodies, internal moderation, local authority

Data

When talking about data schools need to consider and discuss the year groups coming through from KS1 and KS2 with no external data

Current year 5 and 6 (no KS1 data)

and Current year 9 and 10 (no KS2 data)

OFSTED

"We want to see the assessment information you use as a school to identify how well your pupils are progressing in your curriculum and, crucially, how you use that information to improve pupils' achievement." **Sean Harford HMI**

Attendance

Possible questions:

- How do attendance figures compare to schools nationally?

- What about punctuality, do Governors receive this information?

- Are attendance figures improving?

- Who are the weakest attenders? Which groups?

Challenge and support around school finances (1)

- Delegated structure within the Governing Board to look at school finances.
- Interrogate the school budget setting (planning)process in conjunction with senior leaders and staff responsible for helping to set the budget.
- Signing off the school budget for the financial year.

Challenge and support around school finances (2)

- Holding leaders to account for their decision making. Financial risk and sustainability.
- Supporting leaders with their decision making.
- Monitoring the budget spend and reporting as required.
- Completion and submission of the schools SFVS annually to the DFE.

Challenge and Support around Statutory Policies

Governors Statutory Policies			
Safeguarding	Health and Safety	Equal Opportunities	SEND
Behaviour and Exclusions	Admissions	Complaints Data protection and Privacy	Charging and Remissions
Protection of childrens biometric informtion	Information published on the school website	Capability of staff	Early Career Teachers
Staff discipline – Code of Conduct	Children with health needs who cannot attend school		
Governors structures need to be in place to support leaders in formulating policies and also holding them to account for the content and effectiveness			

Challenge and Support Structures (1)

- Regular meetings with linked staff

- Staff presenting to the Governing Board

- High profile around school

- Governor protocols for visits to schools

- Challenging questions posed in a professional manner

Challenge and Support Structures (2)

- Celebration of schools successes

- Attendance at interviews

- Commitment to regular training

- Committee structure fit for purpose

- Accurate minutes

Agenda

OFSTED

Types of Inspection

➢ **Section 5 inspection is graded**

➢ **Section 8 inspection checks to see if the school is still good or outstanding and is ungraded**

OFSTED

➢ **The intention was to increase the number of inspections that Ofsted conducts from the beginning of the academic year 2022/23.**

➢ **As a result, Ofsted says it plans to inspect every school in England by the end of July 2025.**

➢ **During 2022/23, Ofsted inspected schools about three terms (12 months) behind their 'window'.**

OFSTED

Possible questions

- OFSTED will ask what Governors know about what is happening in the school and how they ensure the reliability of that information.

OFSTED

Possible questions

- For example, have the subject areas that underperform been identified prior to the underperformance, and how well do governors know their school? What does internal data tell you? How have you, as a governing body, reacted to internal data? How can you trust internal data?

OFSTED

Suggestions for preparing for an OFSTED visit and discussion.

1) Choose which governors will meet inspectors

2) Meet soon, go through the questions and prompts – get some support form school leaders in answering the questions

OFSTED

Suggestions for when you are being inspected:

The governing body are only available on DAY TWO, but why?

- Because you want to have another rehearsal

- Because you want to know what inspectors have found so that you can both further prepare yourselves but also mitigate against them

OFSTED

Deep Dives

- **The methodology around how Inspectors review the Quality of Education**

- **Is broader and allows inspectors to see the bigger picture and identify systemic issues**

OFSTED

Deep Dives

INTENT

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPACT

www.hillingdon.gov.uk

OFSTED

Deep Dives

1) **Discussions with the Curriculum Leader**

2) **Discussions with the Subject Leader**

3) **Lesson Visits**

4) **Book Looks**

5) **Discussions with Pupils**

6) **Discussions with teachers**

OFSTED

Deep Dives

Do governors understand the school at such a level?

Do school leaders understand your school this deeply?

What is the most important area that OFSTED inspect?

SAFEGUARDING

www.hillingdon.gov.uk

Agenda

Safeguarding

Safeguarding

Discussion on responsibilities for Safeguarding and governors will be discussed.

1. Safeguarding audit
2. Compliance checks
3. School bus/The key

Safeguarding

1. <mark>Safeguarding audit</mark>

Is there a governor responsible for safeguarding?

Does the school conduct a safeguarding audit? Is this completed annually?

Are the outcomes of the audit shared? Is an in-house audit sufficient?

Safeguarding

Do governors conduct a review of the Single Central Record?

Is the safeguarding governor a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DSL)?

Are all governors familiar with the document 'Keeping Children safe in Education 2023'? For example, do they refer to it? Does the DSL?

Safeguarding

Referring to Keeping children safe in education 2023 (KCSIE 2023)

For example, what does your safeguarding policy say about school visitors?

Does it say 'schools and colleges should check ID' as directed by KCSIE? **In my experience ID is rarely checked.**

www.hillingdon.gov.uk

Safeguarding

Where do governors get their information from, how do they keep up to date?

Andrew Hall provides a free weekly safeguarding newsletter

www.hillingdon.gov.uk

Any Questions?